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a gorilla bears marks by which it may be distinguished from the corresponding bones of a man; and that, in the present creation, at any rate, no intermediate link bridges over the gap between *Homo* and *Troglodytes*. . . . At the same time, no one is more strongly convinced than I am of the vastness of the gulf between civilised man and the brutes; or is more certain that, whether *from* them or not, he is assuredly not *of* them. No one is less disposed to think lightly of the present dignity, or despairingly of the future hopes, of the only consciously intelligent denizen of this world."

The monkeys, then, have an outward and even a structural resemblance to man beyond all other animals, and that is all; but why Nature has bestowed upon them this similarity is a mystery beyond our understanding.

VII.—*On the Weddos.* By a TAMIL, native of Ceylon.

(*Read December 8th, 1863.*)

Kandy, 1st October, 1830.

THE Weddos or Widdos of this island are supposed to be the descendants of two royal families of Ceylon, who had taken refuge in the wilderness during the invasion of some foreign power.* Having increased in the jungles and grown into a sect, they precluded themselves from intermarrying and associating with others. The families from whom they are descended are called Murane and Unepane, by which appellations they call themselves at the present day.

As the country they occupy is in the centre of the island, it was not until fifteen years ago that it was frequented by any of their neighbours. A few only from their immediate vicinity had access to barter salt and arrowheads for dried venison, wax, and elephants' tusks. Lately, however, the tracts occupied by them have become more frequented by every class of men in the island, for bartering, and they are more friendly, and are become industrious in their pursuits of killing wild animals, and collecting wax and elephants' tusks. The men are well skilled with the bow and arrow. They will hit their mark with an arrow at a distance of sixty yards with sufficient power to destroy life; no fire-arms are in use amongst them. A few years since they began to cultivate small tracts of lands with fine grain, and to build huts. They are a miserable-looking race, and have a revengeful disposition. Their dialect is ancient Singalese mixed with Telugu, and un-

* About 2,172 years ago, according to the Buddha era.

intelligible to others of the same class who live far from their places of residence. They are quite destitute of letters. They call the sovereign cousin. In former times they wore no kind of clothes, but lately they have begun to wear small pieces on particular occasions, the women round their waist, and the men between their legs. Their females may not be seen by a person of a different caste, nor would they allow strangers to proceed to their hamlets. Those who are desirous to barter with them must wait at particular places near their hamlets with such things as they have with them for barter, when the natives come with their bartering stuff; but should any stranger venture to proceed to their hamlets, he is sure to be shot with an arrow. If their family increases to more than two or three in number, they destroy the rest. Their principal deity is the tortoise, to which they make offerings when they are sick or their women are in the labour of child-birth. They use no kind of medicines, but prayers are offered to their god, the tortoise.

When they visit, they appear in dresses made of branches of trees, tied round their waist in a string; but when they are at their own places, they have no kind of coverings.

A father will not see his daughter after she has attained the age of puberty, and a mother will not see her son after he has grown a beard. The offering they make to their deity is either a piece of dried venison, some wax, or an elephant's tusk. If the disorder with which any one of them is afflicted is not cured by the repetition of the offerings once or twice, they abandon the sick person to die. After they have thus abandoned him, they will not return to the spot again for a considerable time; consequently, their corpses are never buried or burnt, as is the case with the other inhabitants of these provinces. Fever is the disorder of which they have most dread: no other disease do they fear so much. They live generally upon the flesh of wild animals cured in honey, and in times of the scarcity of such food they subsist on rotten wood soaked in honey.

Their favourite places of abode are caves or holes of large trees. When any one of their women is about to bring forth, she is invariably attended by another woman, who waits upon her for two days only. The husband of the woman then returns, and does everything required for her. They frequently leave their infants alone; placing them upon a piece of bark and covering them with another piece, and placing two arrows perpendicularly, their parents will then go in search of food for several miles, and return at sunset.

No article is so much valued by them as salt. There are five provinces in the east of the island that are occupied by them, namely, Udepalate, Raddoavepalate, Ellonpalate, Rooganpalate, and Pallepate in Bintenne.